Snow White Raising Project

This story is set a few weeks after Magical Girl Raising Project

Snow White is a Magical Girl.

However, your job, and who you are, are two different things.

Snow White was part of a selection test that caused a lot of people to die. The administrator of this test, The Forest Musician, Clamberry.

The test involved 16 Magical Girls, and was supposed to produce 1 Magical Girl, to be invited into the Land of Magic, for proper training and placement.

Unfortunately, that's not what ended up happening.

Clamberry, or perhaps it was her mascot, Fav, was smart in hiding their tracks. They had arranged for a new method to select Magical Girls.

Fav, an expert in the latest technological media, being a Cyber Fairy and all, suggested a new app that takes advantage of the mobile gaming boom in the industry.

Magical Girl Raising Project.

The app had a way of tracking down potential candidates to become Magical Girls. With this, Clamberry selected the proper ones to get her test rolling.

After the selections, she requested permission from the Land of Magic in how to handle her tests.

An elimination method based on Magical Candies.

It sounded like a good deal. Collecting points means gamifying the system, and it tends to work in actual work environments.

The Land of Magic approved this method, and Clamberry and Fav began to head to work.

Fav would always report eliminations as just that. Eliminations.

Eventually, the first accident happened. La Pucelle was killed. According to Fav, La Pucelle died because he was ran over by a truck.

Fav used the leverage to request items for Clamberry, in order to better protect her participants.

The Land of Magic agreed to give 4 items to Clamberry.

The tests continued.

Later, there was news of an attack on the National Highway. A high profile attack on the level of terrorism.

The instigator was a Magical Girl by the name of Calamity Mary.

During this event, many Magical Girls were on the scene, and it's presumed that Mary, and another Magical Girl, Top Speed, died in the attack.

The games continued, and Clamberry was confirmed to be killed.

And the tests stopped. At least officially.

Two more Magical Girls died shortly. The final two survivors, Snow White and Ripple, had been the only evidence of this happening.

The Land of Magic had to do damage control. They extended their courtesies towards the two, offered financial support, as well as aid in their daily lives as they deal with the fallout of the incident.

After the incident, the two survivors were brought in to be interviewed, and possibly receive mental counseling.

Snow White was brought in to the Land of Magic as an honorary member, despite not receiving any proper training and working under an unofficially sanctioned test.

Ripple was harder to negotiate for. She killed at least two Magical Girls. They could argue a form of protection for killing Mary, but no one could find any good reason to justify killing Swim Swim.

As a result, Ripple was still considered dangerous. Still, she was also a victim, and they also provided enough money for her to continue her school life until college, if she wished.

During the interview section, some interesting tidbits were picked out.

In Snow White's interview section, the Land of Magic employee asked her about her experiences and what she planned to do.

“Would you like to renounce your right as a Magical Girl? We could safely return you back to your normal life.”

“No,” said Snow White.

“If it’s the traumatic experiences, we can also help you with that. We have magic that can alter memories. We can bring you back to who you were before all this started.”

“I’d rather not.”

“You choose to continue to become a Magical Girl?”

“I do.”

“Would you at least like your memory to be wiped? Any pain, any trauma? We can help you with that.”

“That won’t be necessary. I’d rather keep that.”

During Ripple’s interview as well.

“We can pardon you of any crimes you may have committed during the tests.”

“Appreciate it. But no.”

“You want to stay a Magical Girl?”

“Yes.”

“Very well. It’s also possible for us, though it would take a lot of resources and manpower, to heal your body. Your eye, and your arm. We don’t normally use this powerful magic, but seeing as you’re a victim in all of this, we’d like to extend our courtesy.”

“I’m keeping it this way.”

“You’re sure?”

“I’m sure. It’s a reminder.”

These two girls were interesting.

Snow White in particular was different from the rest. She hadn't killed. For most of the games, she had been targeted by many, but she didn't give in to her urge for revenge.

Then it hit…

…Snow White doesn't have an official mentor.

Her old mentor, La Pucelle, died before he could part any knowledge. Meaning… the position was open.

With a residence in N-City, sufficient research on Snow White, a courtesy from the Land of Magic, all the requirements were met.

Pythie Frederica had been approved to become Snow White's mentor.

N-City was still recovering from the 'terrorist attack', but Pythie's house was quite far from that.

Pythie took residence in Snow White's district. It was time for her to properly introduce herself.

Using the contact information provided by the Land of Magic, Pythie called Snow White.

"Hello, am I speaking to Snow White?"

"Yes, this is her."

"I'd like to introduce myself properly. My name is Pythie Frederica, I've been assigned to become your mentor."

"I didn't hear anything about that."

"The Land of Magic would like to extend their hospitality towards you, in any way possible. So they sent me to train you, as your… previous mentor is… unavailable."

There was a period of silence before Snow White answered again,

"When do we start?"

“Ah, about that. There are some things I must attend to first, so for the first few days, we may only be able to communicate through our Magical Phones. Would that be alright?”

“I’d prefer if we meet face-to-face.”

“Well, I’m just a phone call away. If you need to ask me about anything. Magical Girls, the Land of Magic, or even just day-to-day life, like schoolwork. I’m here to help you. I’m quite knowledgeable myself, you know?”

There was another moment of silence. Then, Snow White spoke again,

“Miss Frederica, can I ask you a question…?”

“Of course, anything at all.”

“Can you teach me how to be stronger?”

Oh…?

This is interesting.

“Stronger how? To have mental strength?”

“I want to be able to fight. Can you teach me?”

My my…

How serious is she?

“Why the sudden urge to fight? A Magical Girl should find peace in justice, love, friendship, and kindness, no?”

There was some silence again. Longer this time.

Snow White spoke again,

“I see. Perhaps that’s true. Well, thank you for the answer, regardless.”

Click

The phone had been shut off.

Pythie became more interested with Snow White. The things she said made her more curious to find out just what's going on in that head of hers.

The next day, Pythie picked up her Magical Phone, and decided to text Snow White.

"*You said you wanted to learn how to fight. Why do you want to do this?*"

She sent the text, and awaited a reply.

Almost instantly, she received it.

"*Because I wasn't strong enough.*"

Pythie grinned at the response. She texted again.

"*But what do you want to do with your new strength?*"

She waited.

She waited still.

"*I have my reasons.*"

Pythie began typing her reply.

As a Clamberry test survivor-

No, delete that.

Your reasons, are they what I think-

No, she won't answer directly.

Finally, she wrote her intended message.

"*I understand you must feel some urge to be stronger after what you've been through. But you must understand, the Land of Magic extended so much courtesy to you, because unlike other winners of Clamberry's tests, you managed to get through it without killing anyone. Seeking strength in violence now will destroy that trust that the Land of Magic has placed.*"

There. This is a good message to send. Now she waited.

A response.

“*Others? There were other tests?*”

She ignored the other message completely.

“*Yes, there were others.*”

“*What happened to the winners*.”

“*The ones that resorted to violence, the ones that became like Clamberry, were caught and dealt with. Mind you, we didn’t know it was Clamberry’s influence. We just assumed they went rogue.*”

“*The ones that get arrested. The methods that the Land of Magic used. Do they work?*”

Pythie thought carefully.

There are those who escap-

Hmm… No…

“*There are rumors of some others that escaped. Whether or not that’s true, we haven’t seen them again.*”

“*Who deals with those?*”

“*We don’t have the resources to look into every rumor possible.*”

No instant reply afterwards.

Pythie looked at her message. The status was ‘*Read*’. So Snow White is either hesitating, not replying at all, or thinking up something else.

About 30 seconds passed before she even began typing.

“*You should look into those cases.*”

“*Who would have the time, Snow?*”

“*That’s a good question.*”

Pythie didn't know how to respond to that answer. Instead, she took the conversation in another direction.

"*Do you really want to know how to be stronger?*"

"*Yes.*"

"*Hm… give me time to think about it. I'll contact you soon.*"

Pythie turned off her Magical Phone. Snow White is an interesting girl. The Snow White that she talked to, at least.

Pythie wasn't even certain if this was the same Snow White she read about.

A few days have passed. Pythie had gone around town and collected some important strands of hair.

Pythie Frederica possesses the ability to see other people, so long as she has the strand of their hair.

She found a strand of the other survivor.

A ninja, one-armed, one-eyed.

Ripple.

She took out the files from the Land of Magic. She wanted to review those cases. She wanted to see what Snow White and Ripple were really like.

Snow White's file is vastly different from what she is.

She was described as an idealistic Magical Girl, with a costume design resembling a pure schoolgirl.

Her pictures from the sightings website, cleared using the help of magic, saw her helping others. Seemingly always smiling.

Pythie flipped the page. Now begins the death match.

There were several chat logs that were saved. Logs of Snow White meeting La Pucelle.

Using Clamberry's administrator phone, the Land of Magic managed to pick up some more chat logs.

Signs of a log-in period by a Magical Girl named Ruler.

Afterwards, a record of Magical Candies being siphoned by Swim Swim.

Ah, so they must've stolen Snow White's candies at some point. Makes the most sense. She's an easy target.

Afterwards, there were chat records between Calamity Mary and Magicaloid 44 that went unanswered.

Some of those records state things such as, '*Have you killed Snow White?'*

Pythie's best guess is that Mary sent this Magicaloid to kill someone, and Snow White was probably her target.

This one wasn't an attempt to steal candy. This one was intentional. That's twice she was targeted.

Snow White's chat logs then went silent for the longest time.

She didn't transform into a Magical Girl for a while after the Highway Incident. Then, after a Magical Girl named Hardgore Alice had died, she suddenly became active again.

An ally? Possibly a friend? Guilt. She feels the burden. So there was a childhood friend in both La Pucelle, and perhaps Hardgore Alice.

Fav's logs were even more interesting. He got in an argument with Snow White, where Snow tried to kill him, but couldn't do so due to Fav's administrator phone.

Cyber Fairies. They were new technologies, but they can be great if used well.

Unfortunately, situations in the Land of Magic don't account for them anymore. Ever since this scandal, Cyber Fairies have been cracked down upon.

There was stigma placed on them.

Most administrators quickly abandoned their old Cyber Fairy mascots and switched to Animal-Type Mascots, or even traditional Fairies.

Mascots in general were uneased by Fav's supposed 'betrayal'. Cyber Fairies especially.

But Pythie didn't want to think about that. Right now, Pythie needed to move onto Ripple.

It's clear Snow White has changed ever since the tests, but what of Ripple?

The first thing Pythie noticed in Ripple's file was the sudden mentorship change. Originally assigned to Calamity Mary, suddenly switched to Top Speed.

It was hard enough to find logs of Calamity Mary, but based on Top Speed and Ripple's logs, it's clear Ripple disliked Mary.

A steady increase in candies. They stayed out of the fight for a while.

Flipping the page, Pythie came upon the Highway incident. This must be the time where Mary and Top Speed died.

A few pages of information, basic events… Oh.

Ripple talked to Fav about Swim Swim's weakness. Then she personally wanted to meet Swim Swim.

Extrapolating, is it possible…

…Top Speed was said to be killed via a stab wound, and although it was another Magical Girl, Tama, who had purchased the weapons that Fav prepared, it's possible Swim Swim was the user.

Which meant that Ripple killed her out of revenge.

Different from Snow White. Ripple isn't ideal. She suffered damage doing so as well.

Her left arm, and her left eye is missing.

Well… That was an interesting read.

But reading something based on facts isn't as good as the real thing.

Pythie sat down in her chair. She took a deep breath. She grabbed her jar, hair everywhere on it. A collection neatly given.

She knew which one Ripple's was.

Long, smooth, glossy. She shivered when she grabbed hold of it. Wrapping it around her fingers, she placed the other hand on the crystal ball.

Ripple was sitting on a rooftop.

Oh…?

Snow White was there too.

Pythie zoomed in. The view looking on both of them. She couldn't exactly hear what they're saying, but she can see their expressions.

The two were sitting down. Snow White looking off into the distance, talking about something. Ripple looking at Snow, smiling.

The way Ripple looked at her, it was the same way a mother would look at her child, or a mentor her apprentice, or like an older sister to a younger one.

It was clear from this, that Ripple was protective of Snow White. Ironic, given the fact that it was Ripple who was more physically damaged.

Snow White looked at Ripple. She mouthed something.

Ripple's face then seemed troubled. She talked about something and shook her head.

Snow White took a deep breath, glanced down, and furrowed her brow. Then she spoke something again.

Pythie wasn't sure what they were talking about, but it seemed like Snow White was about to make a decision, something Ripple probably doesn't approve of.

Then, Snow White's Magical Phone rang, and seeing the message, Snow White looked at Ripple. She chuckled a bit, scratched her head.

"*Have to go*," mouthed Snow White. That much Pythie could see.

Ripple smiled and nodded.

Snow White waved goodbye, and they went their separate ways. The ball won't track Snow White, so there's no point.

Pythie shut off the signal by removing the hair from her fingers.

She leaned back on her chair.

Snow White… Just what is going on inside your head?

Since she was a young girl, Pythie Frederica had admired Magical Girls. Their resolve for justice, their sense of heroism.

The heroes of their story. Main characters who triumph over evil.

After Pythie became a Magical Girl, she had gained enhanced strength, speed, and skills.

Magical Girls see the world differently from most people.

They seek to protect the world, from evils both within and without. Whether it be from humans, or from some other force threatening them.

That kind of Magical Girl is the kind that Pythie idealizes.

The desire for protecting someone, the desire to become strong. That was the kind of Magical Girl Pythie idolized as a child, and that is the kind of Magical Girl she loves even now.

At this point in time, there are Magical Girls that fit one of those categories, but not both.

Magical Girls that fight for justice, love, friendship. They exist, but they have no desire to improve themselves.

Magical Girls who wish to improve themselves in strength also exist, but they often stray in their path, and become similar to Clamberry.

But Snow White just *may* be the one.

Pythie just needs to know how far she'll go.

She called her once more.

"Hello, Snow White? It's Frederica."

"Yes?"

"About your previous request. Still willing to train under me?"

"Yes."

"Perhaps an alternative-"

"No."

"There are other ways to fulfill your life as a Magical Girl. Not just strength."

"Sure. Can I hang up now?"

Snow White's intentions were clear. Unless Pythie was talking about her proposal, Snow White won't agree to train under her, nor would she talk to her.

Pythie chuckled. She continued,

"I'm not saying I won't train you to be stronger, Snow White."

"Then what *are* you trying to say?"

"How willing are you?"

"Very."

"You wish to become stronger?"

"Yes."

"You wish to be able to fight?"

"Yes."

“Your physical abilities are very low. It will take harsh amounts of training in order to get you physically ready.”

“I don’t care.”

“Even if your body begs for you to stop?”

“Doesn’t matter.”

“Even if it means you may not have time to spend with friends or family?”

No response.

However, Snow White didn’t hang up the phone. She was actually considering this option. Considering it a lot.

Pythie smiled, “Think about that, then tell me if you’re still ready.”

Pythie hung up.

This was good. Snow White hadn’t thrown herself over the edge. She hasn’t abandoned her friendships, her family, her relationships, all to become stronger.

She hasn’t become someone like Clamberry just yet.

However, she was close. The test clearly had some effect on her.

After doing more research on Snow White, Pythie understood why she was so intent on seeking strength.

Throughout Clamberry’s killing game, Snow White seemed to be a magnet for unluckiness.

She had two guardians. Two protectors.

La Pucelle, and Hardgore Alice.

Both of them were dear to her. Unfortunately, both of them died because they wanted to protect her.

Snow White couldn’t avenge them.

Snow White couldn't protect them.

Snow White was unable to fight in the survival games.

She felt very useless, like she didn't amount to anything on it. She didn't do very well in those situations, and her friends died for it.

Now, Snow White seeks strength, in order to make right what once was wrong.

She's thinking like a Shounen Manga protagonist. Where she wants to always become stronger, as more and more enemies will appear to challenge her.

She wants to become invincible…

…Good. Desire is good. Ambition and a will to improve oneself is important to being a Magical Girl, so long as she doesn't lose track of her sense of justice, and doesn't become a ruthless killing machine, hunting for sport.

Pythie Frederica worked in the Human Resources Division, so she knew many Magical Girls, scouted plenty, and reported to the Land of Magic.

There are standard operating procedures to this, but Pythie had her own way of selecting Magical Girls.

First, she'd look at young children. Kindergartners. They were easier, as they still had hope for the future, and endless desire.

She'd find the hair of a pre-school teacher, and watch the class.

She'd find kids who were bullied, who were alone in class, and who weren't happy. Kids who were happy are satisfied with their lot in life, so they have no ambition or desire.

Kids who were outcasts tend to have higher ambition. Proving themselves, wanting to be loved, wanting to be respected.

After selecting a candidate, she'd follow them, and take their hair. Spy on them. Make sure they have a desire to change their life, as some kids have no such desires to do so, even if their lot is worse.

Once she finds the perfect candidates, then she sends the reports.

Once they're Magical Girls, she checks on them again.

This is where the selection really matters. Out of all of those kids handpicked by Pythie, only some still wished to improve themselves.

The power of a Magical Girl is often enough to make someone satisfied. What once was a great desire was easily sated by being powerful. Those weren't the ones Pythie was looking for.

The ones Pythie were looking for were the ones that still desired improvement. Those are ideal Magical Girls.

Pythie tried this method to adults too. Salarymen, construction workers, homeless beggars.

Unfortunaetly, there were some who were uncomfortable with being a Magical Girl, some who chose to use their powers for evil, and some who just became satisfied with their life.

As adults, their worldview was set.

Children were still innocent, and their worldview can be molded.

Most of her successes come from the lower age range, but also extended to the years of the 20's or so, who are just entering the adult phase of their life, and trying to make it big in the world.

From all these tests, Snow White fit the bill. She was a Magical Girl Pythie would be willing to train.

However, she may want to have a partner.

Someone to convince her to stay, regardless of how this training regimen might end up.

Pythie approached the rooftop of the department store.

This was Ripple's stop in her patrol route. Unlike Snow White, who can hear voices of people in trouble, Ripple had no such powers.

She had to patrol the city.

Despite being wounded, she still does Magical Girl work. Now that's impressive.

Ripple's power was *To hit anything she throws*. A useful power that definitely helped her win the survival games.

Ripple's long flowing black hair was swaying in the wind. Its smell reaching Pythie.

Pythie breathed it in. The sweet scent of her hair. She wanted to stroke it and comb it herself. If only she had hair like that.

Ripple noticed Pythie right away, glancing and turning around to her.

"Greetings. My name is Pythie Frederica," said Pythie, offering her business card.

Ripple slowly took it, read it for a bit, and looked at her again.

"I can see that."

"I wanted to ask you if you know about Snow White's proposal."

Ripple suddenly became interested.

"What about Snow White?"

"I'm her new mentor. Assigned by the Land of Magic."

"New mentor?"

"Yes, and she wanted something quite peculiar. She wanted to be strong, in a physical sense. I figured it's best to ask for your opinion, first."

"…Snow said that?"

"Yes."

Ripple looked away, thinking. Her left sleeve was blowing in the wind. Armless.

Despite her injuries, she acts like it's nothing.

"So, why are you here?" asked Ripple.

“I wanted to invite you.”

“What do you mean?”

“I know you’ve also lost people. If you’d like, I’ll also train you, to become stronger.”

“Not interested.”

“I won’t report it to the Land of Magic.”

Ripple’s eyes widened. She looked at Pythie with a curious face, wondering about her words.

Pythie smiled,

“I promise. I won’t do it. Off the record. Plus, you can help Snow White. You know her more than me.”

Ripple began considering her options.

Pythie extended her right arm, “Do we have a deal?”

Ripple took a moment to think.

Then, she took her hand. “No. Battle’s over for me. I’m done fighting. I’ve got people here to help. Snow should probably do the same.”

Pythie nodded. “Of course. I understand. However, I do want to ask. Why does Snow White want to become stronger?”

“I think she’d rather prefer to keep that to herself.”

“I can’t teach her unless I know what it is she’ll use it for. I don’t want another incident like Clamberry, or worse… Calamity Mary.”

Ripple furrowed her brow. She gritted her teeth, and took a deep breath.

“Alright, I’ll ask.”

“Perfect. Here’s my contact, if you ever need me.”

Ripple shared addresses and phone numbers with Pythie, and now Pythie has gained an increase in her network.

The next day, Pythie received a call from Snow White.

“Yes? Pythie Frederica speaking.”

“What did you tell Ripple?”

Instant question.

“I only wanted to know your reasons. I figured asking a close friend coul-”

“Don’t *do* that!” shouted Snow White.

Her voice was raised. She was agitated, and slightly angered. She seemed to be a mixture of scared and anger.

Pythie felt curious, but reassured her.

“It’s alright. I just wanted to know why you want to fight, Snow White.”

“I have my reasons.”

“If you tell me, I can teach you,” said Pythie.

“If you won’t teach me, I’ll train by myself. I don’t need to depend on you, so don’t think that’s going to make me open up,” said Snow White with conviction.

“But you do need a partner.”

“What?”

“A sparring partner. A mentor. A training partner. You think you can fight against someone like Clamberry without knowing your own limits?”

No answer.

Pythie continued,

“Let me rephrase my question from last time. Remember when I asked you what you’d sacrifice to become stronger? Let’s try it again, but change the question. I understand *sacrifice* might have too much weight on its meaning. Tell me, what would you use to get stronger.”

“What do you mean?”

“What are you willing to do?”

There was no answer, but Pythie heard some nervous breathing. She continued talking,

“Use me, Snow White. Use me as your trainer. I can help you, I just need to know that you’re doing it for the right things.”

“I don’t need to depend on you to train me.”

Pythie needed Snow White to train under her. She had to make sure there was no other choice.

Snow White implied that she could train herself, but Pythie managed to convince her that she needed a partner.

So her next logical option would be Ripple.

“If not me, then who? Are they even willing to train you? To go the extra mile? I work for the Human Resources Division. I’m a Land of Magic veteran. I can help you grow. I know how Magical Girls work.”

It seemed like Snow White was caught off-guard by this sentence.

Pythie knew that Ripple wouldn’t want to train Snow White. Not after what she said during her meeting with Pythie.

“Tell you what, go ask that person, whoever it may be, to see if they’re willing to. Do it soon, because then I’ll know you’re serious about it.”

Still no response. Pythie won’t wait.

“I’ll be waiting for your next call, Snow White. You know my number.”

Click.

With Ripple going to ask Snow White her intentions, and Snow White going to ask Ripple to train her, she knew this would cause fallout and conflict.

The two may be partners, but their philosophy and worldview are different.

Black and White.

Ripple is tired of fighting, and she wants to help people in other ways.

Snow White has a passion to stop evil, and wants to become stronger because of it.

None of them are wrong, both are noble pursuits, but they won't be compatible with the other.

All Pythie had to do was wait.

Pythie had set up her crystal ball.

She twirled Ripple's hair, and there, Ripple and Snow White met up again. Pythie couldn't hear what they said, but she could still see them.

They started off with a normal conversation, and both seemed awkward.

At some point, however, one or the other began to talk, presumably about what Pythie had discussed with both the other day.

Snow White seemed to ask Ripple a question, but Ripple immediately shook her head.

The conversation began getting a bit rougher after that. It went downhill fast.

Ripple rejecting whatever Snow White is asking over and over. Snow White pleading with her. Ripple mouthing 'no'.

Snow White got angry, she began trying to reason with Ripple, but Ripple was adamant.

They were having a fight.

The argument continued, until at some point, Snow White had enough. She stood up, turned her back on Ripple, and left.

Ripple seemed to just watch, eyes still focused on Snow White, but with a tinge of sadness in them.

Pythie picked up her Magical Phone and contacted Ripple.

“…Hello?”

“Hello, Ripple? It’s Frederica.”

“Ah… Hey.”

“Did you talk to Snow White?”

Ripple’s eyes on the crystal ball seemed hurt after that sentence. The timing was too soon. It might seem too suspicious to Ripple, as she looked around for a bit.

She took a deep breath, and she held the phone close to her,

“…I’m worried about her,” said Ripple.

“Worried?”

“Yeah… What she says she’ll do… It’s gonna get her killed.”

“How so?”

“It’s just… It’s dangerous.”

Pythie was curious. She was expecting Snow White to call her whenever she got home as well, so she had to make the conversation quick.

She saw Ripple’s image.

Her face looked like that of a pained child trying to swallow hard medicine. She seemed troubled.

“What did you say to her.”

“Something she didn’t want to hear.”

“You rejected her wishes?”

“I told her to stop what she’s thinking, yeah.”

“After what she’s been through? After having her original wish ruined by the test? I wouldn’t have brought it up like that if I were you.”

Ripple began breathing a bit faster. Pythie could tell she’s stressing herself out. She’s gritting her teeth, her face getting red.

“I… don’t want her to get herself hurt.”

“But this is what she wants. You have no right to stop her, do you?”

“I know, she’s gonna do it anyway. She’s stubborn like that, even before… She never fought anyone, even though people were fighting left and right.”

“So why fight it? The best you can do is help her so that she doesn’t take a self-destructive path.”

“I…”

“Don’t break her dreams again, Ripple. She doesn’t deserve that.”

She saw the crystal ball. Ripple’s lip trembling, a tear falling from her eye.

Pythie saw enough. She had done her job. She unwrapped the hair strand from her fingertips, and hung the phone.

A few minutes later, Pythie received a call from Snow White.

“Hello, Frederica speaking. Snow White?”

“…Y-Yes.”

Snow White’s voice was trembling, and Pythie heard sniffling on the other side.

Ah, she was crying.

The argument must’ve been hard on her mind. Pythie wasn’t surprised, but she acted like it. Of course, Pythie already knew what she wanted to do.

She *will* mentor Snow White, and she *will* train the ideal Magical Girl.

“What’s wrong? Everything fine with school? Friends? Family?”

“I… I’ll tell you.”

“Tell me?”

Oh…?

“I’ll tell you why I want to fight.”

“Oh, this is sudden.”

“Yeah, well… I’ve decided.”

“I’m all ears,” said Pythie, with a soothing tone.

“This test. Clamberry. Rogue Magical Girls. I know it’s happening in other places. I know that there are bad Magical Girls out there, doing horrible things to people. I want to stop that.”

“What do you mean?”

“I want to stop all of them. All of them, doing those things. Doing horrible things. I want… I *need* to stop them. To do that… I need to be stronger. Please…”

“Hmm…”

“Please… I need to know how to fight… This is something I have to do…”

The passion was there.

With Ripple, she hates the people. She hates the individuals who do bad things. With that, the passion will burn out.

Snow White, however, hates the actions itself. It doesn’t matter to her who does it. She hates seeing people do it. This means her passion is greater.

She will be the ideal Magical Girl.

“Very well.”

"…Is that…"

"I talked to Ripple, go speak with her. When you need help, contact me,"

Click.

A noble goal. To stop those who want to re-enact these tests. Snow White will go far indeed. It's something that Pythie approved of in the ideal Magical Girl.

She will become a symbol. The Magical Girl that can fight for justice, yet will strive to become stronger. The Magical Girl that the Land of Magic needs.

With this, she can save the Land of Magic.

With this, she can reform it.

Change it for the better.

A symbol needs to be invincible. A symbol needs a name associated with it. Something that will make enemies of that symbol fear her.

Being in Human Resources, Pythie could find the right people to spread the word, to increase the belief in Snow White.

Snow White needed a nickname as well.

…The White Devil? Perhaps to contrast with another powerful demonic-style Magical Girl? No… doesn't work.

…The White Reaper? Who brings death to those who oppose her. No, that's not right either, that seems sinister.

Well, Pythie will find a proper nickname for her later. For now, Pythie was glad.

She can now finally train her apprentice.

The next few days, Pythie had viewed Ripple again in her crystal ball.

It was in a park in the middle of the night. The two Magical Girls were training. Ripple watching Snow White, teaching her how to properly kick, jab, punch.

Snow White's movements were slower than Ripple.

Everytime she tried to hit her, she would easily dodge her attacks.

Pythie couldn't hear them, but she could see them through her crystal ball.

Ripple tossed some wooden blocks. Snow White had to hit them in mid-air. She missed almost all of them.

She was still sloppy.

Day after day, they trained, Ripple still not taking her seriously, as Snow White struggled and struggled to properly do the correct posture, stance, and movement.

Snow White was sweating, her breathing was heavy, and she looked tired. Despite Magical Girls having increased endurance, Snow White had spent almost the whole day training.

Ripple talked to Snow White, looks like she's offering her resting time.

Snow White shook her head. She continued the training. She would always continue until her body seemed to ache every day.

She was making progress, but slowly.

Pythie watched Snow White. She would mostly be spending her weekdays attending school, and only during the nights would she train.

That was the problem.

Pythie contacted Snow White,

"Hello? Snow White?"

"Oh… Hello. Thank you for talking with Ripple. My training's progressing."

"I see. Ripple told me as much."

"She did?"

"But I understand you're progressing quite slowly."

“Well… I can’t just become an expert overnight.”

“Maybe not, but there is a way we can increase that speed, if you’re up for it.”

“Huh?”

“We need to see what’s getting in your way of training. Firstly, your human life. A Magical Girl is a Magical Girl first, and a human second.”

Pythie had Snow White in view in her crystal ball, having collected her hair in one of the many days where she was training with Ripple.

She used this to gauge her reactions to how she spoke.

Snow White was writing down what Pythie was saying.

“If you look at people like Clamberry, who are the kinds of people you will be fighting, they stay mostly in their Magical Girl forms. They rarely become humans again.”

“I see…” said Snow White, as she focused on writing Pythie’s words.

“You can’t just relegate your Magical Girl activities to nights. Every day you need to become a Magical Girl. We’re different from humans. Our capacity is higher. Your body must accept that.”

“Okay!”

“I’m serious. Think of it this way. You want to be accepted to a prestigious school? You need to focus only on that school. The same goes here. Abandon your human life, or abandon your attempt to be strong. You must choose.”

“I know. Don’t worry.”

“Next. You’re still fighting like you’re safe. The path you will take will involve you fighting enemies that will try to kill you. Every single attack must count. Don’t wait for an opportunity, make one. Every hit must be capable of finishing off your opponent if it connects.”

“Understood.”

“Ripple is going easy on you, because she knows you’re not ready yet. Practice. Show her what you’re capable of, and contact me when you’re done.”

After the phone call, Pythie went back to her work. She still had to find candidates for Magical Girl selection tests, as she was still under the Human Resources Division. Marking down candidates, while at the same time, training Snow White and Ripple.

More months have passed.

Snow White’s behavior has changed.

After breakfast, instead of going to school, she would meditate.

At noon, she would train by herself on proper fighting techniques.

At night, before bed, she would do Magical Girl activities, patrol the town, and again, meditate.

She only slept 3 hours a day.

Despite this, thanks to being mostly in Magical Girl form, she never really needed to sleep. Although, the energy helped her.

Pythie didn’t know how her family reacted to her missing school most of the time, but it seems like Snow White is handling it fine.

The next training session with Ripple that she saw was interesting.

It started off as usual, but this time Snow White wanted to spar with Ripple. Ripple granted her request.

The two began dueling.

Snow White threw a left jab, but Ripple dodged it, tripped Snow White, and using her right arm, slammed and pinned her down to the ground.

“Try again,” mouthed Ripple.

Pythie watched with anticipation through her crystal ball.

Snow White dusted off the dirt. They fought again, Snow White looking out for any attacks made by Ripple.

Ripple was still going easy.

Snow White began focusing on Ripple’s right side, forcing her on the defense.

A hook to Ripple’s right was blocked, and Snow darted down towards Ripple’s right side. Ripple pre-emptively blocked a possible strike.

However, Snow White immediately bounced back, and used the momentum to launch a kick with her right leg towards Ripple’s left side, hitting her left torso so hard it knocked her down towards the ground.

Snow White’s using the fact that Ripple’s left eye was gone.

She wasn’t fighting fairly, she was fighting to her advantage.

Ripple looked at Snow White with surprise and awe. Snow White breathed heavily and smiled, offering a hand up to her friend.

Ripple took it, and got up, nodding while smiling.

It seems that Snow White has grown, and Ripple may just acknowledge her as an equal fighter.

After their training was over, Pythie contacted Ripple once more with her Magical Phone.

“Hello, Ripple? It’s Frederica.”

“Ah, Frederica.”

“How is Snow White?”

“Oh… She’s training. Training well. Growing, too.”

“Wonderful, wonderful! I’m so excited. Oh, can I ask you something?”

“…Sure?”

Pythie picked up a file. The file on the current Clamberry test. She flipped to the pages with items on them.

“In your test, you had some items, correct? Do they still exist?”

“Yeah… We kept them.”

Ripple sounded nervous, like she didn’t want to remember the details.

“The bag, cloak, medicine, weapon, and rabbit’s foot, right? All five?”

“Yeah.”

“Who has what, if you don’t mind.”

“I have the bag, cloak, and the weapon. Snow White has the medicine and rabbit’s foot.”

“I see… Do you mind if I borrow the weapon?”

“Why?”

“I’d like to give it to Snow White.”

“No. Absolutely not.”

Ripple still didn’t want Snow White to become as strong as Pythie wanted. She was still against this, despite wanting to fulfill Snow White’s wishes.

“And why not?”

“Because I’m not letting Snow White near this thing.”

“Sooner or later, she’s going to have to learn to handle weaponry. She’s training for that, you know.”

“It’s not safe”

“That’s not a question of safe, it’s a question of if she can use it properly.”

“No! Snow White is *not* a murderer, and you sure as hell aren’t going to make her one.”

Ripple still has bad memories of those weapons, it seems.

“Whether or not you think it’s dangerous, the choice of using it is hers, not yours.”

Ripple’s teeth were gritted, and she hung up the phone. Looks like Pythie will have to find another way of making Snow White stronger.

Still, she has grown so much in these past few months.

Speaking of Snow White, Pythie’s phone rang again.

Snow White?

“Hello, Frederica speaking.”

“Thank you.”

“Hm? Snow?”

“Yes. Thank you *so* much for your advice! It worked! I’m getting stronger, I feel like I’m really changing.”

“Ah, of course, Snow. I always want to help you. Oh, I have some more advice. Advanced techniques.”

“Really?”

Pythie switched on her crystal ball. Snow White writing notes again.

“The core of a Magical Girl is belief. If you imagine yourself as your ideal, believe in it, and live it every day, then you will become that ideal.”

“Understood.”

“You need to enjoy the experience too. If it gets too frustrating, then you’re not really appreciating it, are you?”

“I guess not. But don’t worry, I am enjoying this.”

“Good, good! Report with progress, Snow White. I’m sure you’re doing fine!”

“Oh, um… Miss Frederica. Thank you.”

“Ah, it’s nothing.”

“No, really… you really saved me. You helped me grow. You earned my thanks. Thank you so much.”

Pythie saw Snow White in the crystal ball, smiling, tears of joy at being strong.

Pythie held her hand in her chest. She felt happy. How can one girl make her feel this happy? Is this how she survived Clamberry’s tests? She seems to bring joy to those around her.

“It’s my pleasure, Snow White.”

It was the truth. Snow White was the answer. She was the key she was looking for this whole time, and only now does she realize that this is how it is.

Pythie walked over to a file. A file labeled ‘Ideal Magical Girl’. She took out one strand of brown golden hair from it.

You used to be the one who I thought would be ideal, but there is someone better than you now. Someone who better matches the image of an ideal Magical Girl.

She threw the hair in the dumpster.

A tinge of sadness. She’ll miss her. But now, there’s a new Magical Girl that Pythie longs for. Snow White.

The platinum blonde hair, placed on the file, alongside information of Snow White.

Pythie will never forget her.

Pythie had just finished more work for the Human Resources Division.

10 files were scattered within her table, all read and analyzed. Pythie had also just finished writing a report on her mentorship of Snow White.

A Magical Girl willing to do whatever it takes to help others.

Pythie looked at Clamberry's file.

Fav's evaluation of Snow White.

Delusional and Daydreams. *Probably not a good candidate to fight*.

Clamberry and Fav were very wrong. They just didn't see the potential that Snow White had. They couldn't find a way to make her grow.

They called their game the *Magical Girl Raising Project*, but they can't even raise strong opponents by themselves.

Pythie checked in again on Snow White and Ripple. Now is about the time they would be training.

Last week, their training ended rather messily, for the park they're in. Most of the equipment was destroyed, as Ripple began fighting Snow White on even level.

Ripple was also beginning to grow as a fighter, possibly inspired by Snow White herself.

They had now moved on to the mountains. Once the home of Clamberry, now perfect for a fighting practice.

The boulders and rocks were broken every time the two girls fought.

They exchanged blows, and Ripple was even using her magic to throw stones at Snow White. A non-lethal way to test Snow's pressure in a real fight.

The best part, both of them were *smiling*. They were enjoying this match.

Snow easily punched and grabbed the stones Ripple threw, and they exchanged blow for blow.

Pythie took notes on Snow White's fighting style. She watched them as they sparred day to day, noting her tendencies, her mistakes, her tells.

That night, Snow White called her,

“I was able to fight Ripple one-on-one! We were so evenly matched!”

“So I’ve heard! I do have some criticisms based on what Ripple told me. You have some tendencies that are easy to spot.”

“Oh?”

“Yes, tells, that I could spot and see. I know when you’re going to do a certain move because of your habit of telling it. It happens to everyone.”

“Really?”

“Yes. For example, when you’re about to execute a feint to the right, you hold your right foot back in a specific way.”

“Ah… I see. So I should change that.”

“You *could*, or you could use it to your advantage. Trick Ripple. Use your tells to your advantage. Find her tells as well. This is the key to combat.”

“Thank you again!”

“Of course! I’m here to help you, Snow.”

“I was thinking… maybe… you might wanna watch us train?”

“Watch you train?”

“Yeah. Sometime in the mountains, maybe?”

“I could… if I weren’t busy. I’ve got to scout for several Magical Girls for the Land of Magic, you see.”

“Ah, okay then. Well… Whenever you’re free, I guess.”

“Of course, Snow White. Anytime.”

“Thanks again, I’ll see you around!”

Now, we wait to see her development again.

Snow White's latest fight with Ripple was an interesting one. She's truly grown this time.

Snow White followed Pythie's advice. She used feints and faked her attacks and moves in order to lull Ripple into a false sense of familiarity.

Unfortunately for Ripple, Snow White also studied all of Ripple's moves.

Every move that Snow White made was unpredictable. She would manage to hit Ripple, and Ripple couldn't answer back.

Every move that Ripple made, meanwhile, was easily countered by Snow White.

Months of sparring made it easy for Snow White to know Ripple inside out.

It was as if she was reading her moves ahead of time.

Tripping Ripple down, using her blind sides, fighting in constrained spaces, Snow White was using every advantage she had.

At the end of it, Ripple was the one who was tired.

The two of them laughed it off, Ripple looked at Snow White with pride. As if she had successfully raised a protégé.

Snow White thanked Ripple, bowed down, and the two waved goodbye.

Ripple…

Ripple was the problem.

She may be a good sparring partner, but Ripple will block Snow White's potential. She still can't let go of the fact that Snow White needs to be free of the shackles of safety.

Ripple is the one that's stopping Snow White from becoming what she could, an ideal Magical Girl.

Pythie sighed. She loved both of these girls, but she knew Snow White was the better option for her.

Still, she didn't want to have to get rid of Ripple, if she could help it.

She'll have to see if she can agree with Ripple. If not…

…Well, it's unfortunate.

Pythie turned on the television.

A news report of 10 girls who died. Seemingly of a bus accident somewhere, based on their wounds.

Those were some bad news.

Pythie didn't like that. She switched the channel.

Pythie felt like a failure. She needed to free Snow White. She needed to take the extra step. She can't keep doing this, watching Snow White while Ripple won't let her anywhere near her apprentice.

She needed to confront Ripple.

The next time Snow White had a training session, Pythie waited until Snow White had safely exited the mountain.

Then, she used her crystal ball to teleport herself to Ripple.

Waiting by the riverside. She still hadn't moved.

Pythie approached Ripple. Ripple noticed immediately.

"Long time no see, Ripple."

"What are you doing here?"

"Just checking in. Have you reconsidered my offer? Of training Snow White with weaponry?"

Ripple furrowed her brows.

"The weapons are still with you, I take it?"

“None of your business.”

“Snow White *has* gotten stronger over the months. Training with you over and over again. It’d be a shame to see that go to waste.”

Ripple’s eyes glanced at Pythie.

“I knew it,” said Ripple.

“Hm?”

“You *were* watching us. Somehow.”

It seems Pythie may have said too much.

“I’m her mentor. She tells me what I need to know. It’s my job to know where she is.”

“I don’t think so, creep. You don’t think I don’t know people like you, trying to use her for whatever you’re planning?”

“Hmm…”

Ripple can no longer be negotiated with. She may expose Pythie to Snow White. Snow White may not believe it, but…

…They’re alone now.

Pythie smiled.

As quickly as possible, she launched a high kick towards Ripple. Ripple instinctively dodged it, but her balance was off.

Pythie saw that Ripple had something in her right arm. A fluffy rabbit’s foot. Bringing luck when she needed it most.

Ripple has it?

Did they switch items without Pythie knowing?

The rabbit’s foot brings luck. Luck for Ripple, unlucky for Pythie. At least it only worked on a single time.

Pythie took this chance to kick Ripple again towards the river, causing Ripple to fall into the rushing rapids.

That's when Pythie saw her…

On the edge of the river…

Snow White was watching in disbelief… and anger…

It was over. With this act, Pythie may as well sever the relationship she had between her and Snow White.

Snow charged towards her.

Snow White will never forgive her.

Snow White was betrayed by her.

Snow White was angry.

But Snow White was supposed to go home. Why did she come back?

Pythie had forgotten one thing. Snow White's powers. Ripple must've known. Ripple must've known that Pythie came here to kill her.

Ripple made herself defenseless so that Snow White could hear her in distress.

Snow White jumped on a rock, used the momentum, and kicked Pythie halfway across the clearing.

As Pythie climbed up, a kunai struck itself on her shoulder. Ripple summersaulted from the riverside, removing her sandals, barefoot. Katana being gripped by her teeth, kunai on each finger. Moving faster than before.

The two Magical Girls took turns, moving in tandem.

Snow White elbowed Pythie, Ripple kneed her, Snow White kicked her in the stomach, Ripple jabbed her.

This was beautiful…

These two were in synch…

Pythie created these two…

Snow White was listening to Ripple's mind, instinctively responding to Ripple's every move without communicating.

They had grown so much.

The two cornered Pythie near a Cliffside wall.

Snow White then continued beating her up. Her eyes screamed murder.

Snow kicked Pythie towards the wall of the cliff, and as Pythie bounced off the wall, Snow moved back, jumped off her own wall, and used the momentum to slam into Pythie with her fists.

Ripple threw what seemed to be a small knife towards Pythie, aimed at her forehead.

Quickly, Pythie dodged it immediately as it entered, but it scarred her scalp. Hurt, Pythie saw what had really transpired.

Ripple didn't throw the knife at Pythie.

She threw the knife to pass it to Snow White.

Pythie was dodging Snow White's knife blows, but each time, Snow White managed to slice her arms and her torso and her legs.

Pythie can't die. Not here. She wanted to see a future where these Magical Girls will become the true heroes of the Land of Magic.

These were her creations.

These weren't Clamberry's…

…Before Snow White, Pythie had always admired Clamberry's selection process, and by extension, Clamberry herself.

Pythie tried to recreate the tests, but would always fail. She didn't have the know-how to properly re-enact the tests.

Recently, in the past few months, she had sent 10 Magical Girls to a death game. Most of them were killed, or committed suicide.

A failure.

She wanted to find the ideal Magical Girl, but Clamberry had already created one, right in front of her.

Clamberry was going to be her answer before…

…But now, there was someone better… Better than Clamberry could ever hope to be… Someone with morals, and ideals…

Snow White.

Pythie can't die. Not like this.

She jumped up above the cliff. She equipped her crystal ball, and she immediately wrapped a strand of hair around her fingers.

A small young girl was sleeping in her bed.

Pythie pulled out the girl, and dangled her across the Cliffside. The little girl groggily woke up, and began screaming when she realized where she was.

Snow White and Ripple were stunned. Pythie was about to kill this girl. They couldn't move. Not yet.

This was the time. Pythie threw the girl away. Ripple rushed towards Pythie, while Snow White went for the girl.

As expected. Snow White would go for the victim, and Ripple would be the aggressive one.

However, Pythie had a plan.

She switched her crystal ball's channel to Snow White. The back of her neck was visible. She didn't want it to come to this, but at the rate Ripple's running, Pythie didn't have a choice.

As Ripple ran up the cliff, Pythie plunged her hand, intending on pulling Snow White in, putting her in Ripple's way.

That was the plan…

…But

As Pythie pushed her hand through the crystal ball, Snow White immediately ducked under it.

She knew? How!?

Snow White's movements were fast. Ducking, releasing the girl to safety, brandishing the knife, grabbing Pythie's wrist, stabbing the knife directly on Pythie's right arm.

"GAAH!"

Snow White then twisted the knife, as well as her right hand, breaking it completely as the knife was jammed inside there.

Immediately, Pythie felt a Katana stab her calf as well.

"AAAAAAGH!!"

She screamed in pain, as both the weapons caused her extreme pain.

Pythie fell forwards, tumbling down the cliff as she violently landed down to the clearing on the river.

Her crystal ball rolling away in the distance.

Her right hand broken, her right forearm stabbed with blood. Her right calf having a katana stuck to it.

Pythie couldn't stand up even if she tried.

The katana had pierced her bones. The pain was numbing to her. But this… This feeling was amazing…

To think, when she first came here, Ripple was on the verge of quitting battle, and Snow White was still unable to fight.

Now… Now they're both fighting as if they were true ideal Magical Girl veterans.

All because of Pythie. All because Pythie guided them both, in her own way.

Regardless of what they thought of her, they would continue on their journeys. Ripple would continue to help people, and Snow White…

…Snow White is going to change the world.

Her strength… She's going to stop all the evil Magical Girls of the world.

Pythie wouldn't mind dying like this, if this is her legacy.

Ripple's face was pure anger, but Snow White's face only told of betrayal. Snow White looked down at Pythie. Her face a mixture of intense anger and emotionless pain.

Her eyes were intense. The burning passion she had.

Pythie was the villain.

Snow White was the hero.

If that's what it will take…

If that will create the ideal Magical Girl… then Pythie will play that role.

Snow White's burning eyes only had hatred for those who would manipulate and use people, and right now, Pythie could feel the emotion.

But she also saw sadness.

Tears were forming up as well.

Snow White was betrayed by the person she trusted to make her a hero.

She went towards Pythie. Was she going to kill her?

Snow White grabbed Pythie, and she tightened her fists, slamming Pythie with it, as hard as she could.

The hit was enough to cause Pythie's vision to blur.

She was going to lose consciousness…

…She didn’t kill her…

...Even after all she did...

…Wonderful! Amazing!

Her fierce eyes… They were that of a person who would seek out justice… a person who would hunt evil Magical Girls…

…Ah

The Magical Girl Hunter…

When Pythie wakes up… and presumably be in the Land of Magic… That’s what she’ll call her…

She was defeated by the Magical Girl Hunter…

That’s a good sounding name…

Pythie chuckled, and she smiled… as the world faded to black…